

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraphs [0007], [0012], [0016], [0018], [0029], [0033], and [0034] with the following amended paragraphs:

[0007] On account of the slit introduced into the sleeve-like cover, with an expenditure of force or expenditure on expansion which is lower as compared with a slit-free or continuous cover, slight internal diameter variations of the cover are possible, so that slipping over or pulling over onto a printing form cylinder is made easier or simplified. The invention permits the variation in printing length of a press in a straightforward manner with a short changeover time: if sleeve-like covers according to the invention in various formats or with various external diameters but with substantially identical internal diameters are kept in reserve, printing forms of various lengths can be accommodated on a fixed-radius printing form cylinder of a press and used for printing. Expressed in another way, it is possible for sleeve-like covers according to the invention in different formats to be used to change the printing length of a press.

[0012] Furthermore or alternatively, the recess can widen trapezoidally from the outer circumferential slit can be substantially symmetrical in relation to a plane which cuts the slit and in which the axis of symmetry of the sleeve-like cover runs.

[0016] In another advantageous and further development, which can be provided additionally or alternatively to that already presented, the sleeve-like cover has at least one recess in its inner circumferential surface, in which, when the sleeve-like cover is held on a printing form cylinder, at least one protrusion of the printing form cylinder and/or at least one lever element for producing a tangential tension in the sleeve-like cover can engage. In this way, the cover can be secured and fixed well on the cylinder.

[0018] The invention can be employed in printing units of sheet-processing presses (sheet-fed press) or in printing units of web-processing presses (web-fed press), in particular offset presses. Typical printing materials are paper, paperboard, board, organic polymer film or fabric or the like. In this case, the press is designed in such a way that it permits the fitting of sleeve-like

covers at least to the printing form cylinder: a cylinder journal of the relevant printing form cylinder can be exposed, so that the sleeve-like cover can be pushed or pulled over the printing form cylinder substantially parallel to the printing form cylinder axis. With reference to variable printing length, the axial spacings of the relevant printing form cylinder and of the transfer printing cylinder interacting with it can be changed, that is to say enlarged and reduced, so that a sleeve-like cover held on the printing form cylinder can roll on the circumferential surface of the interacting transfer printing cylinder with a specific contact force. A web-processing printing unit of this type is described in the document US 5,813, 336, whose disclosure content is incorporated in this representation by reference.

[0029] In figure 2, it is shown that in the slit 12 there is a retaining force element 16, by means of which a plate-like printing form 22 can be fixed to the sleeve-like cover 10: a first spring 18 and a second spring 20 are accommodated or fixed in the slit 12. A plate-like printing form 22 with bent-over edges 24 is fixed in that, by means of the retaining force element 16, more precisely the springs 18, 20, the edges 24, which project into the slit 12 when the plate-like printing form 22 is to be held on the cover 10, are pressed against the walls of the slit 12. The bent-over edges 24 can be hook-like. The plate-like printing form 22 can be fitted, held and drawn on the sleeve-like cover 10 without tension, pretension or bracing outside the press, so that the group comprising the sleeve-like cover 10 and the plate-like printing form 22 can be handled together.

[0033] In figure 4, the sleeve-like cover 10 with plate-like printing form 22 fitted is shown on a printing form cylinder 26. The internal diameter of the sleeve-like cover 10 is slightly smaller than the diameter of the accommodating printing form cylinder 26. A tangential tension of the sleeve-like cover 10 is achieved by means of a lever element 34: the lever element 34 engages in a recess 30 in the inner circumferential surface 28 of the cover 10 and, when rotated in a direction 36 by means of a rotating and tensioning device, not shown in detail here, acts in such a way that the slit 12 becomes narrower, that is to say that the distance between the walls of the slit 12 against which the edges 24 of the printing form 22 are pressed becomes smaller. A protrusion 32 engages in a further recess 30 in the inner circumferential surface 28 of the cover 10. In addition, the fitted plate-like printing plate 22, whose edges 24 are simultaneously fixed to the sleeve-like cover 10 by means of the retaining force element 16, is therefore tensioned in the

tangential direction. In the tensioned state, the position of the sleeve-like cover 10 on the printing form cylinder 26 is fixed. At least the further recess 30, in which the protrusion 32 engages, can run in the manner of a groove substantially parallel to the axis of rotation of the cover 10, so that the sleeve-like cover 10 can be removed from the printing form cylinder 26 and fitted to the printing form cylinder 26 in the direction substantially parallel to the axis of rotation of the printing form cylinder 26, it being possible for the protrusion 32 to move in the groove-like further recess 30. For the fitting and removal of a sleeve-like cover 10, the lever element 34 can be sunk below the contour of the printing form cylinder 26. Alternatively, the recess 30 that interacts with the lever element 34 can be designed to extend in the manner of a groove substantially along the axis of rotation.

[0034] An alternative embodiment of a sleeve-like cover according to the invention is shown in figure 5. Although a sleeve-like cover according to the invention is suitable for holding plate-like printing forms or plate-like rubber blankets, a sleeve-like printing form or a sleeve-like rubber blanket can also be fitted. The sleeve-like cover 10 shown has a slit 12 running substantially radially, whose walls have a shape which match one another, here aligned substantially radially or parallel to one another, in such a way that they can make a form fit. On the inner circumferential surface 28, the sleeve-like cover 10 according to the invention has a recess 30, in which a protrusion 32 from the accommodating printing form cylinder 26 can engage. By means of a lever element 34, a tension in the circumferential direction can be produced, until the walls of the slit 12 contact each other with a form fit when the lever element 34 is pivoted in the direction 36 and acts on a recess in the cover 10.